GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TOURISM
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:120
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2016
Promotion of Ancient Games to Attract Tourists
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Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether an increase is expected in tourism, world-wide;
(b) if so, the schemes being prepared by the Government to take the advantage of this increase;
(c) whether the Government is considering any project to popularize such games/sports which are related to ancient culture of the country to attract tourists, particularly in Karnataka; and
(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a): The United Nation World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) projects International Tourist Arrivals to grow by 4% world − wide during 2016.

(b): Various initiatives undertaken by the Government to attract foreign tourists to the country are as follows:-

i. Multilingual Tourist Infoline:

The Ministry of Tourism has launched the 24x7 Toll Free Multi-Lingual Tourist Info Line on 8.2.2016. Besides English and Hindi, the languages handled by the contact centers include ten International languages namely, Arabic, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. The multi-lingual helpdesk in the designated languages provides support service in terms of providing information relating to Travel & Tourism in India and assist the callers with advice on action to be taken during times of distress while travelling in India and if need be alert the concerned authorities.

ii. E − Tourist Visa (e-TV):

The Government of India has introduced the facility of e-TV for the citizens of 150 countries at 16 airports. Introduction of e-TV is a Path breaking measure by the Government in easing entry formalities in the country.

The Visa on Arrival facility has been extended to the nationals of Japan w.e.f. 1st March, 2016.

iii. Revision of the e-TV fee:

The e − TV fee has been revised in four slabs of 0, US $25, US $48, and US $60 from November 3, 2015. Earlier, e-TV application fee was US $60 and bank charge was US $2 which was uniform for all the countries. Bank charges have also been reduced from US $2 to 2.5 % of the e-TV fee.

iv. Publicity and Promotion:

The Ministry of Tourism promotes India as a holistic destination in the international markets. As part of its promotional activities, the Ministry releases campaigns in the international markets under the Incredible India brand-line to showcase various tourism destinations and products including its cultural heritage.

Moreover, a series of promotional activities are being undertaken in tourist generating markets overseas through the India Tourism Offices abroad with the objective of showcasing India's tourism potential and promoting tourism to the country. These promotional activities include participation in travel fairs and exhibitions; organising road shows, Know India seminars & workshops; organizing and supporting Indian food and cultural festivals; publication of brochures, offering joint advertising and brochure support, and inviting media personalities, tour operators and opinion makers to visit the country under the Hospitality programme of the Ministry.

The Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to Stakeholders and Tourism Departments of States/Union Territories for undertaking promotional activities under the Marketing Development Assistance Scheme.

v. Central Financial Assistance:

Ministry of Tourism operates various schemes through which Central Financial Assistance is provided to States/UTs for overall

development and promotion of tourism. Following two schemes have been launched for development of tourism in thematic manner:

Swadesh Darshan: Swadesh Darshan was launched for development of theme based tourist circuits in a way that caters to both mass and niche tourism in a holistic manner. Thirteen Circuits namely North-East India Circuit, Buddhist Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, Coastal Circuit, Krishna Circuit, Desert Circuit, Tribal Circuit, Eco Circuit, Wildlife Circuit, Rural Circuit, Spiritual Circuit, Ramayana Circuit and Heritage Circuit have been identified for development under this Scheme.

National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD):

This Scheme has been launched for the development and beautification of pilgrimage sites to tap the growth of domestic tourists driven by religious sentiments and to augment tourism infrastructure at places of pilgrimage to facilitate pilgrims/tourists. Cities namely Amritsar, Kedarnath, Ajmer, Mathura, Varanasi, Gaya, Puri, Dwarka, Amaravati, Kanchipuram, Vellankanni, Kamakhya and Patna have been identified for infrastructure development under the scheme.

(c) and (d): Primary responsibility for promotion and development of sports disciplines including traditional/conventional indigenous games like archery, wrestling, kabaddi, kho-kho, etc. is that of the concerned National Sports Federations.

The existing schemes of the Government of India and Sports Authority of India (SAI) lay adequate focus on the promotion of traditional and indigenous games. Under the Scheme of Assistance to National Sports Federations (NSFs), the sports federations dealing with indigenous/traditional games including archery, wrestling, Kho-Kho and Kabaddi have been given Government recognition, and are provided with financial assistance for promotional and developmental activities.

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